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THE AMERICAN NATIONAL PREACHER.

No. 1. Vol. XXI.

JANUARY, 1847.

Whole No. 241.

SERMON CCCCXXXVII.

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NEW YEAR'S SERMON FOR 1847. A YEAR CONSIDERED AS A PART OF HUMAN LIFE.

We spend our years as a tale that is told.—PSALM xc. 9.

In the margin this is rendered “as a meditation,” in accordance with the usual meaning of the Hebrew word תְּנַנָּה. Some have rendered it “as a thought,” the most rapid of all things; some “as a sigh,” a brief expression of sorrow that escapes from us and vanishes. In our common version it is rendered “as a tale that is told;” an idle story that is designed to amuse for a moment; that is not worth seriously regarding or making an effort to remember; that soon passes away from the recollection. According to this interpretation, the meaning is, that life is suffered to pass as if it were a matter of no consequence; that it is spent in no employment that is really becoming our condition; and that it is worn away by trifles which leave no permanent impressions, and which produce no important results.

Either of these interpretations conveys not an unapt account of life as it is usually spent; and either of them will accord with the object which I have in view this morning. Either of them would furnish an appropriate description of the life which many of us have led during the past year. That year has gone for ever, like a tale that is told; like a passing thought; like a sigh that is gently breathed forth, and is soon over. By many of us it has been spent without any deep sense of the value of time; of the true objects of existence; of the bearing which the passing year has on our future being; of the importance of a year regarded as a part of human life.

At the beginning of a new year it is proper to look over the past, and to inquire, as we form our plans for the future, what is the purpose for which God has placed us in this world? The joys of the past year live now only in the recollection. Its sorrows

have been passed through, and, like the joys which we have experienced, are not to be recalled. Our departed joys leave the heart sad that they are passed ; the sorrows that we have experienced leave it sad at the memory of the loss of friends, or property, or health—at the memory of blasted hopes, and of disappointments in our fondly-cherished plans. In spite of ourselves, and amidst all our attempts to be cheerful, no matter what the year may have been to us, there is a sombre feeling which comes over the soul, corresponding to the sombre season of the year ; and in the midst of our rejoicings the mind will be pensive and sad. We cannot help saying to ourselves, “We shall never experience these pleasures again. We shall never again grasp the hand of the friend with whom we began the year, but who has passed away for ever. We shall never now see the fulfilment of the hopes that we then cherished, which seemed to us so bright and cheering in the prospect. We shall not be able to recall the hours that we have wasted in indolence or folly ; to carry out the plans which have been defeated by the allurements of sensuality, or the fascinations of pleasure ; or to secure now on our own character the happy influences which *might* have been secured if that whole year had been devoted to virtue and true religion. We shall never be able to go back over that part of our journey, to correct the errors that we have committed ; and to extract the poisoned barb with which, by ingratitude or unkindness, we have pierced the bosom of a friend. We shall never have an opportunity of asking pardon of him whom we have injured, who is now in his grave ; nor can we recall the harsh word or the unkind look that has fixed itself indelibly in the memory of those who love us. We cannot re-summon from the past this part of our probation as it hastens away to join the distant centuries in the land of shades, and make it now tributary to our salvation.”

A year, as our lives are bounded, may be a different thing to us from what it is to other beings. It is different from what it was to the antediluvian patriarchs, when almost a thousand of our years gave them an opportunity of repairing past follies, and regaining what might have been lost—for a year bore scarcely a greater proportion to their lives than a month does to ours. It is different to us from what it is to an angelic being, to a redeemed spirit, to a lost soul ; for by them it is not passed as a season of probation, and life with them is not soon to give way to another order of things. A year on earth ; a year in heaven ; a year in hell ; if time is thus measured there, has its distinct features in each place. We are not concerned now, however soon we may be, with what a year is to the dwellers in other worlds, but we are much concerned to know what relation it sustains to our own existence here, and what bearing it may have on our existence hereafter. With this view, I propose to ask your attention, as a suitable subject for meditation at the close of one year, and the commencement of another, to this topic—*a year considered as a part of human life.*

I. A year, however it may be spent, is, in respect to each individual, a very material part of his active life ; of life that amounts to anything. We speak much, as the Bible does, of the shortness of life ; and yet we seldom form any correct idea of the reality on the subject, and are perpetually liable, in our anticipations, to make life longer than it really is. We fix the limit at seventy years—a limit brief in itself; not often reached; rarely passed. But even if life were made sure to us for seventy years, there are great and important abatements to be made from those years as to any positive efficiency in regard to the real purposes of existence. Let there be abstracted from those years, as life is in part ordered, the period of unconscious infancy ; the period of playful childhood ; the period in youth when we are merely *preparing* for the future—a time often extending into manhood ; the periods of sickness, of sleep, of needful relaxation ; of the infirmities of age, and a very large portion of the three-score years and ten will be absorbed. I do not say that the playful period of childhood, or the forming season of youth, or even relaxation, sickness, and infirmity, are wholly useless, and are to be cast out of the estimate of our actual existence ; but I speak of what is commonly understood *as life*, when a man may make money, not merely learn how to make it ; when he may cultivate his farm, not merely learn the art of doing it ; when he may preach, not merely study to become prepared ; when he may construct a steam-engine, not merely learn how to handle his tools ; and when he may visit his patient, or plead a cause at the bar, instead of poring over his Galen or Coke. Abstract all that we *must* from life, and you take away much of what seems to be its enormous length to a child, and explain the reason why it appears so short to him who has run through it. If he had *had* seventy years of uninterrupted vigor and health, when he could have prosecuted life's great enterprises day and night, without sickness, infirmity, or sleep, life might appear long to the old man, too. But such is *not* life. Seventy such years are now unknown to man ; he may count his lot a rare exception who can number anything like fifty such years. The average length of active life is far below this standard.

What, think you, is the average life of the mass of men who have survived the perils of infancy and childhood, and who have passed through the season of preparation, and have entered upon their active duties ? The average life of a minister of the Gospel is said now to be less than twenty years ; and after all the long season of education in childhood and youth ; after all his self-denial in procuring an education ; after his seven years' patient toil in a college and seminary, and often at an expense beyond all his patrimony, what life holds out to the minister of religion in promise is, that he may labor not thrice as long as he has been employed in the mere business of making preparation. It is possible that the average of life in other professions *may be* somewhat more, but it is probable that this would not be a very unfair state-

ment of all who are called to grapple with public duties ; to meet the excitement at the bar, or in the hall of legislation ; or to have all the sensibilities of our nature taxed when seeing a patient lying in peril of death. The average life of the farmer is greater ; that of the seaman, and the soldier, and the miner, and of various classes of manufacturers, less ; and these twenty revolving periods commonly measure active human life. A year, then, becomes a very material part of our earthly existence.

Again. The real amount of active and efficient life, so short at best, is often greatly diminished by two other causes. One is, that many *begin* life late, and the early portion of what might have been their vigorous or useful existence, is spent in accomplishing little. Cromwell was a farmer until he was past his fortieth year, nor until that period did he appear with any degree of prominence on the stage of public affairs. Cowper composed the Task, translated the Iliad, and wrote nearly all his poems after he was fifty, and has left few memorials of what he did during what is commonly regarded as constituting nearly the whole of life. The early part of what might be vigorous and active life, is often spent in idleness, or in dissipation, or in abortive schemes ; and in such cases the individual has advanced far on his way before there is any serious purpose of accomplishing anything that will make mankind acquainted with the fact that he ever lived. Thus many a one that becomes a Christian, has spent his early years, and the best part of his life, in dissipation and riot ; in vanity and frivolity ; in unbelief and sensuality ; and the time in which he can now truly *live*, and accomplish anything in the real purpose of living, is crowded into the period when already the infirmities of age begin to creep on. The other circumstance is this : life is often greatly abbreviated in its *closing* period. I mean not merely by death, or infirmity, but by other causes. A man has gained what he wished, and withdraws from the world. He has won a battle, and retires to repose on his laurels. He has amassed a fortune, and retires to enjoy it. Or he becomes disappointed by a few bold and unsuccessful efforts, and gives over in despair. When young, he plumed his wings for a lofty flight, and meant, like the eagle, to ascend and look at the sun ; but the waxen plumes melted, and he fell to the earth to attempt to rise no more.

It is a rare instance, where one toils patiently on from youth to old age ; forming a preparation for future usefulness by diligence and virtue in early life ; securing all that was gained in youth by constant industry, and adding unceasingly to the treasured stock of wisdom, knowledge, and virtue, until the old man is gathered to his fathers like a shock of corn in his season, fully ripe. Newton was one such man—a man by his native talent “placed at the head of the race,” and by his diligence setting an example to the humblest of mankind, who would wish to accomplish anything in wisdom or learning. Our own country at the present time

contains one such man—yet lingering among us, but sinking to an honored grave—who may not be improperly mentioned here; a man who began life earlier than almost any who have been distinguished in public affairs, except the younger Pitt, and who has gone now beyond the common limits of human existence; who made all of life at its commencement that could be made of it, and who, when other men withdrew from public affairs, seemed resolved to show the world what can be made of its close; who has accumulated more knowledge in the departments to which his attention has been turned than any other living man; who has filled up all his days with diligent acquisition and the discharge of great public duties, and who will probably die, after all the obloquy heaped upon him, as the most honored man—except one, with whom no mere mortal is to be compared—of the generations through which he has lived. But these are rare exceptions. They show what life *may be*, not what it commonly *is*. Usually short in itself, it is greatly abridged either at its beginning or its close; and a year, therefore, is a very material part of human existence.

II. A year is important as a part of human life, because it is, with many, a forming period, determining all that is to come. A single year, in certain circumstances, may do much more on this subject than many years at another period; and while, perhaps, to multitudes, that particular year may be undistinguished from others, yet to many it has an importance which no other one can have. It is to them *the decisive year*; the year that will be remembered though all others shall be forgotten. Let me illustrate this thought with reference to the year which has just now closed, and which, to many, ever onward will have an importance which can pertain to no other period of life. 1. It has been such to those who have during that year determined on their profession or calling in life—an act that is, probably, to shape your whole future course; to determine the nature of your studies, your plans, and your associates; and which is ultimately to measure the amount of your usefulness or your celebrity in the world. 2. It is so in regard to those who have entered on some new form of business—an act that will perhaps determine whether they will be rich or poor, honored or disgraced, when they leave the world. 3. It is so in respect to those who have formed new friendships, entered into new business relations, or contracted marriage—acts that are to affect all their destiny here below, perhaps their everlasting doom beyond the grave. 4. It is so in regard to those who have formed some plan to be developed far on in life—whose fruits they do not expect to see until many years shall have rolled away. 5. It is so in regard to those who, during the year, have surrendered themselves to some insidious form of temptation. They began the year strong in the principles of virtue. During the year those principles have been assailed with a force which they did not anticipate, and which they were not prepared to resist, and they yielded. They have taken friends to their embrace,

from whom at the beginning of the year they would have recoiled with abhorrence. They have admitted conceptions of guilt to their bosoms, to which, until the year now closed, they were strangers. They have visited places of amusement or infamy, for the first time, from which a year ago they would have turned away with unutterable loathing. They have, for the first time, indulged freely in intoxicating drinks; allied themselves with dangerous companions; contracted habits of evil, destined hereafter to grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength; and to which they are hereafter ever to be slaves. They have for the first time disobeyed a father's and a mother's law in being found in a place of revelry and sin. They have for the first time drawn tears of anguish from a mother's eyes, or caused a sister to blush at the mention of her brother's name. These things send an influence ever onward; and far on in some future scene of poverty and disgrace; in the lonely dungeon; an outcast, in the alms-house, or dying with a broken heart, a wrecked and ruined man, the year 1846 will be remembered as, by a bad eminence, the forming period of your life. That momentary act of yielding to temptation; that indulgence in some guilty passion; that hour when first you drank a social glass, never dreaming that you *could* be a drunkard, may seem to be unimportant to you now, and the year which has just closed may appear to have no special moment as distinguished from others; but the time may come when, in the beautiful and sad language of Job, with reference to the year of his birth, you may "open your mouth and curse" it, and say—"Let that year be darkness, let not God regard it from above; neither let the light shine upon it. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it. Let it not be joined unto other years; let it be solitary; let no joyful voice come therein. Let the stars of its nights be dark; let it look for light but have none, neither let it see the dawning of the day." 6. Again. The past year has been important above other years in reference to those who have given up the heart to God; who have renounced the world, and who have begun truly to live to the honor of their Creator. By them that year will be remembered with songs and rejoicings for ever. It will determine their character, their course, their destiny during all the present life; and then their character, their companions, their destiny to all eternity. It will be remembered by them with joy, when they lie on the bed of death; when they stand at the bar of God; and when "the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll."

III. A year is an important portion of human life, when considered as a part of probation for eternity. We have already seen that it is a material part when considered in its relation to *active* life, whatever may be regarded as the object of living. It is especially so, however, when considered as a part of the probation for a future state, and when we reflect on the manner in which it is

actually spent by the mass of mankind. The period of probation for eternity, is indeed commonly much longer than what I have spoken of as the *active* life of man ; for it includes not only vigorous and healthy manhood, but childhood and youth—the very best period of life regarded as probation ; the period of sickness, bereavement, and trial—times when, though a man can do little for the present life, he can do much for that which is to come ; and old age, which though the least favorable of all the periods of life as a season of probation, is still a time when, though the old man can no longer go to the bank or the exchange ; when he can no longer plead the cause of injured justice, or lift up his voice in the senate house, he may *possibly* secure the salvation of his soul.

Life,—all of life, except unconscious infancy, the ravings of delirium, the stupefactions of disease, when the mental powers refuse to perform their office, and perhaps some forms of old age, second *infancy*, when there is no memory, or judgment, or sense,—is a season of probation for eternity. It has indeed other objects, for there are duties growing out of our relations here ; and, if man is to be himself the expounder of the design for which he lives, it has many other objects, and probation is the least and the last. But whatever other objects there may be for which man is to live, he is in all things a candidate for another world, and all other things are to be subordinate to that. He is here with reference to a changeless state of being. He lives and acts for that, whether he is conscious of it, or cares about it, or not. Each word, thought, deed, sends on an influence beyond the present life ; the account is closed at the end of each year, nay, each moment ; and he will meet everything which he has done, registered with unerring accuracy, the moment he crosses the line which divides one world from another. If this be so, then a year of human existence has an importance which is not attached to it by the great body of men, for the results of conduct during one year may be multiplied beyond our power of computing now, into the joys or sorrows of eternity. And if this be so, then the fact that a year is wasted, or what is the same thing, *misimproved*, in regard to this great purpose of being, has an importance which claims the attention of every traveler to another world. To the great mass of mankind, it is a sad fact, that the year which has just now closed has been thus a wasted year in regard to the great purpose for which God sent them into the world. They may have improved it for other purposes, but not for this. They may have gained much, but they have secured nothing of that purity of heart without which no one shall see God. They may have won many conquests, but they have secured no victory over the “lusts which war against the soul.” Nay, to human view, so far from making *advance* in preparation for heaven, they are *receding* while life wears away. At the close of the year, they were, so far as we can see, less likely to be saved than they were at the beginning. They had less tenderness of feeling ; less susceptibility of impression ; less

disposition to attend to religion ; less respect for the Gospel ; and they were more under the dominion of worldliness and sinful affections ; more engrossed in the cares of life ; more proud and unteachable ; more tenacious of their opinions ; more under the influence of companions and associates who "cause to err," and who lead the soul away from God.

As there can be no doubt that there are some of this very description in this house to-day, I beg leave to address myself to you directly. You will concede the point, I trust, that life is a season of probation—a point which you will probably be as ready to concede now, when we have passed through another year, and when you *see* how little a year accomplishes in regard to the usual objects of human pursuit—as you would be at any time. How then has that departed year been spent by *you* as a part of probation ? What advances have you made in the real purposes of existence ? What is now the probability of your salvation compared with what it *seemed* to be when you began the year ? Let me state a few things, all of which you will doubtless admit to be true.

(1). First, you have passed through another year, during which you have been all the while on trial for eternity. You have been in the world where this is the great purpose for which it was made, and is preserved. You have lived in the world where the Son of God became incarnate and died to make an atonement for sin ; where the offer of salvation is made to all human beings ; where the Holy Spirit comes to apply salvation to the hearts of transgressors ; where many have been prepared for heaven. You have passed the year amidst great privileges and advantages ; in a Christian land, with nothing to hinder you from becoming a Christian if you chose ; and where, perhaps, during the whole year you have regularly heard the gospel.

(2). Secondly, you have spent the year without religion. You began it without religion ; you have gone through all its changes without it ; you have closed it without it. Neither at its commencement, or during its progress, or at its close, have you had any true love to God, or repentance for sin, or faith in the Redeemer. At no period during the year, have you been prepared to die. At no period, if you *had* died, would you have entered heaven. The year to you has been, in regard to the great purposes of life, a *wasted* year ; and were it stricken out now from the list of your years, you would suffer no loss by it in regard to the salvation of the soul. You do not yourself believe that you are any *better* prepared to meet God than you were when the year began.

(3). Thirdly, many whom I address have gone through the year without having taken one step, or even cherished one sincere desire, to secure their salvation. In all that year you have not penitently and seriously kneeled, and asked God to have mercy on your soul. You have not once sat down to read the Bible with a desire to know what you must do to be saved. You have not

listened to the gospel with a deep personal interest—a sincere wish to know what the truth is, and what a man must do if he would be happy when he dies. You have not formed a distinct plan or purpose *ever* to make this a serious matter ; and amidst all the schemes of which the year has been prolific ; all the subjects of inquiry—commercial, financial, political, scientific, or moral which have occupied your attention, the question how a sinner may be saved, and an immortal soul made happy, has come in for no share of your investigations.

(4). Fourthly, whatever you may have *gained*, you have gained nothing on this the most important of all subjects on which the mind of men can ever be employed. You may have gained a friend ; you may have gained property ; you may have done something towards establishing a reputation which will not at once be forgotten when you are dead. But, in this great matter of salvation, you are as poor as you were when you began the year, and have done nothing to secure the treasures where “moth and rust do not corrupt,” or to make clear your “title to mansions in the skies.”

(5). Fifthly, with some of you, the year has been passed in utter frivolity. Its chronicle would be a sorry record, on which you yourself would blush to look, of time spent at the toilet, in trifling conversation, in frivolous amusements, in reading that which did nothing to improve the understanding, or to purify the heart ; in idleness, in gossip, in needless slumber, in pastimes whose only object was to make you forget that there *was* such a thing as *time*. You had already forgotten that there was an *eternity* ; and the aim of living has been to make the whole of existence a *blank*. Perchance, also, some whom I address have spent the year in scenes whose recollection in days to come will only pour burning sulphur on a conscience laid bare to the wrath of God.

(6). You are then, sixthly, now nearer the grave, but not nearer heaven, than you were when you began the year. You have a harder heart ; you are more under the influence of the world ; you are bound to this life by more attractive ties ; you are less accessible to the gospel ; you are more disposed to turn away from the counsels of wisdom. There was more hope of your salvation to human view at the beginning of the year than there is now. “Hope deferred” in regard to your salvation, has “made the heart” of many a friend “sick ;” and already a father and a mother begin to look upon the prospect that you will be saved with despair.

Think then how short life is at best ; how few are its active years ; how important a portion a single year *may* be, and *is*, of your earthly existence ; and then think of a whole year more, now absolutely wasted in regard to the great purpose for which God placed you in the world. Think how little you have gained that is worth living for even on the lowest principles of calculation about the value of things, and how soon even that little may be taken away ; and then think what you have lost.

To-day, you might have been a Christian. The light of salvation, with the cheering light of this beautiful morning, might have shone on your path ; the peace which results from reconciliation with God might have taken up its permanent abode in your heart ; and the last sun of the year which has just "hastened to its setting," might have gone down on you as a child of God, and an heir of salvation. Though it had been the last time that you were to behold him, and this morning's sun might have greeted other eyes but not yours, your souls would have had peace ; for you would have gone where there are brighter skies, and where there is no need of "the light of the sun or the moon."

IV. Any one year may be of unutterable importance as a part of human life, because it may be the time when probation will end, and life closed. To millions the year now closed has had this unspeakable moment. It was the period ordained of old in which they were to give up their great account ; the outward boundary which God had affixed to their existence on earth. They had lived as long as infinite wisdom had judged sufficient to secure the purposes of their being, and their places were wanted for an advancing generation. A new race that was coming up needed houses where to live ; land to cultivate that they might be supported ; air to breathe, and a place where to prepare themselves for eternity ; and it was needful for the former generation to be taken away. The Great Husbandman removed them as the farmer does the dry and withered stalks of the last year's harvest, that he may clear the ground for the green sprouts of another crop. So the earth, the great harvest-field for heaven, is swept all over of its old inhabitants every thirty years, and more than thirty millions of this cumbering population is removed each year. It is not, indeed, done all at once, nor is one place made wholly vacant at any one time ; but the work is not less certain, nor the sweeping away less entire. Where are the armies of Semiramis, of Cyrus, of Xerxes ? Where are the hosts that mingled in strife in the conflicts of the "Roses?" Where are the Pilgrims that settled New England ? Where is Penn, and where are the Indians with whom he agreed to live in peace ? Where is there a solitary human being to tell us what was on the earth at the beginning of the last century ? All gone—swept away, as if they had all been cut down at once.

So of us. Of any one year, and of any one of us, there can be no certainty but that *that* year may have all the importance derived from the fact that it is the closing year of probation. To tens of millions the year which has just closed, has had the pre-eminence over all the other years of their existence, that it has sundered them from all that they held dear on the earth ; that it has consigned their bodies to the grave, and sent their spirits up to the awful bar of God. Among them are not a few that we knew and loved. They began the year with us in the land of the living ; as the year rolled on they gave us the parting hand, and its last sun

set on their graves. Events have shown that in our individual history, that year was not to have this eminence. Whether to any specified individual this eminence among the years, shall belong to the one on which we have now entered, is known to no human being. To some of us, it *will* have that eminence, and before its close the record on the tomb will tell the passing stranger, that this was the year on which *we* learned what it is to die and stand before God.

We have entered on another year. We endeavor to cheer each other, in a world that we all feel to be full of dangers and sorrows, by mutual congratulations and kind wishes for the future. I will not attempt to penetrate the future. I would not know it if I could. I will not damp the ardor of your joyous anticipations. I will not now dwell on the prospect that many of the tender ties which bind us together, before the close of this year will be broken; that many of our hearts will bleed; that many of these eyes will run down with tears. If I live I shall see all this soon enough;—if I die, you will see it in me. But I will not anticipate it now. I will join in your felicitations and wishes for happiness and prosperity. But stand fellow-traveller to eternity, may I not also ask one thing of you? It is, that this year may be wholly devoted to the great purposes for which life is given; that you will stand no longer as the barren fig-tree, a mere cumberer of the ground; that you will this day resolve before your Maker, that, by his grace, the year 1846 shall be the last wasted, unprofitable, ungrateful, irreligious year of your lives—the last year on which you will close your eyes on truth, and live without the hope of heaven; that by the grace of God, the sun shall no longer rise and set in his annual revolutions on you a thoughtless, impenitent, unpardoned sinner. It is that you will now form a purpose by his help to reach forward to the eternal crown; and that as the days of the advancing year roll rapidly on, each morning shall witness the consecration of yourself to your God, and that in the shades of each evening you will render him praise. So living, its months, and weeks, will pass away without regret—for they will be bearing you nearer to your eternal home. So living, if you see its close, you will arrive there with far different feelings from those with which you ended the last year. And so living, if you *are* to be arrested during this year, it would not disturb or alarm you much, if “a still small voice” should be borne to your ear this day amidst its joyous congratulations and its hopes, saying “this year thou shalt die.”

“ So live, that when thy summons comes to join
 The innumerable caravan that moves
 To the pale realms of shade, where each shall take
 His chamber in the silent halls of death,
 Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,
 Scourged to his dungeon; but sustained and soothed
 By unfaltering trust in Christ, approach thy grave
 Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
 About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.”

SERMON CCCCXXXVIII.

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF REV. WILLIAM J. ARMSTRONG, D.D.

DELIVERED IN PARK STREET CHURCH, DEC. 9, 1846.

(PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE A. B. C. F. M.)

BY REV. NEHEMIAH ADAMS,
BOSTON, MASS.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.—PSALM cxvi., 15.

THE journey begun by our friend and brother, in health and with pleasant anticipations, has been completed on the bier. The funeral rites have been performed in another city. He has lain down, “till the heavens be no more.” His companions in death are distributed to their last resting-places. The storm is hushed. The fragments of the wreck are disappearing. I was prepared to say, the wind and waves no longer toll the bell which for several days was lifted above the waters on a portion of the wreck; but I learn this evening that the bell, though sunk beneath the surface, is now and then urged up by the swell of the sea, and thus imitating, as it were, the expiring efforts of the dying, tolls with a convulsive stroke. The full moon has many times walked in brightness over the scene of desolation, where the equal pulses of the sea now seem to deny the well-known agony and ruin.

All the incidents of the disaster have been spread far and wide, and have produced their impression upon the public mind, which is soon to be occupied with other events of various importance, while this will take its place among the historical facts which are repeated with an interest lessening from day to day with the lapse of time. To many, here and elsewhere, however, it will never lose its interest while life remains; the impressions made by it will be identified with their inmost thoughts and feelings; and in their characters and conduct its sacred influence will be felt to their dying day.

We come together at a time far enough removed from the event to admit of calm contemplation and reflection, and not far enough for any of us to have lost the vivid impressions at first made by it.

We all feel the need of soothing and consolatory thoughts, and the natural desire to know the facts in the case has been fully satisfied. The official relation of our friend and brother to the Missionary House in this city gives a propriety to this public memorial of him, which our private love for him, and our disposition to do him honor, are happy to acknowledge and improve. The spirits of just men made perfect need no earthly honor to secure for them any happiness or reward; yet it cannot be a matter of indifference to a good man in heaven to know that surviving com-

panions and fellow servants appreciate his character and his services, and that "devout men carry him to his burial and make great lamentation over him."

A common ruin buried this servant of Christ, and forty or fifty others, in instant death. He was distinguished among them by his ministerial office, by his pious endeavors to instruct them in the time of peril, and by his most fervent and affecting supplications, and by the impressiveness of his demeanor during the whole trying scene. But the God whom he served, and whom he delighted to honor, did not interpose to distinguish him from his companions by any apparent alleviation in his sufferings or in the manner of his death. A portion of the deck fell upon him and upon many others with him. Who could have told at that moment by any sign which the accident conveyed, which of them feared God,—if any of them did not? "This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked." In calamities, the impression would be made upon the mind, were it not for faith, that God disregards his servants when he mingles them in a promiscuous overthrow. He suffers the sea to destroy them, or the falling weight to crush them, or the cannibal savage to devour them, and does not come forth to arrest any law of nature, or do any special favor in their behalf. If we sometimes see good men rescued by a special interposition of Providence, we see the same in the case of wicked men; and if we see wicked men arrested by death on their way to their families, we see the same in the experience of eminently good men.

No one has ever lost a friend by a sudden calamity, especially a friend who was known and loved as a good man, without having his feelings and his faith somewhat tried by the seeming disregard of Providence in the circumstances attending the loss of life. There is a natural expectation that God will shield the person of an eminently good man from indignity; that there will be some special mark of regard in the manner in which, if his life must be destroyed, he will receive the fatal stroke. We invest the laws of nature with something of our own feelings of reverence for the persons of those whom we respect and love. We almost expect to see, in the providence of God, the same regard for them.

There are times, indeed, when the manner of a good man's death has something of beauty, or sublimity, or of peculiar fitness, no less noticeable than the well known coincidence in the death of two Presidents of the United States upon the anniversary of our national independence. While it is the general law of Providence that one event happens to the righteous and to the wicked, the sovereignty of God makes exceptions to it, in certain cases, in favor of good men. We are not to expect them so as to feel disappointed when they do not occur; nor, when a good man dies, like John the Baptist, with no sign of special regard for him or the manner of his death, are we to conclude that he is

less an object of divine favor than another. We bow with reverence and awe before that appointment of divine Providence by which the laws of nature fulfill their commission without respect of persons, teaching us impressively the truth revealed in Scripture, that life is a scene of trial and of reward; that we are not to expect the divine testimony in our behalf by any remarkable providence; but in the exercise of faith, our hope reaching to that which is within the veil, we must meekly bow to the common lot of man in the outward circumstances of providential events, though by them we may make our grave with the wicked, and be "numbered with the transgressors."

The inference, however, which might be drawn from such an undistinguished end, is contradicted by the Word of God. The seeming neglect of good men at such times, and the apparent want of regard for them in some of the events of Providence has no foundation in fact. At all times, under all circumstances, and when there is the least apparent interposition of heaven in their behalf, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Though hunger, and cold, and fear, and sad thoughts about the family circle, and the painfulness of spending a festival day* amid the perils of a wreck, the violent winds and waves, and finally the falling deck, and the engulphing waters, indicated no regard to the man of God more than to any other, yet his death was an event of interest and importance in the sight of the Most High.

The text asserts this general truth: **THE DEATH OF GOOD MEN, UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, IS DEEPLY INTERESTING IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.**

Among the multitude of deaths, their death, like a valuable thing in a promiscuous heap, is precious to Him. It is not forgotten nor disregarded as an ordinary event; it is invested with peculiar interest in the sight of God. A few considerations will illustrate this truth.

1. *The death of a good man is a great and important event in the history of his redemption.*

God chose him in Christ before the world was. He called him by his special grace into his kingdom; he applied to him the benefits of the Savior's death; he sealed him by the Holy Spirit; he has made all things thus far work together for good. That saint is to be among the fruits of the Savior's sufferings and death; his salvation is a necessary part of the great work of redemption. When probation with him is about to end, can it be a less interesting event to the Most High, than the event of his conversion on which God bestowed that "mighty power" which the Apostle compares to that "which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places?" The husbandman who planted the tree, and dressed it, and watched it, comes for the fruit; although the fruit be gathered

* The day of the Annual Thanksgiving in New York and sixteen other States.

by shaking the tree, he is not angry with the tree, nor neglectful of the fruit which he causes to fall.

2. The death of a good man is precious in the sight of God, because the life of such a man is intimately connected with the interests of the kingdom of God in this world.

To every servant God has committed a trust; from every servant who deserves the name, the cause of God in this world receives advantage. Some are put in trust with children to educate for future usefulness. Others are placed in a circle of relatives and friends for an example and a reproof, and as silent witnesses for God. They keep the consciences of others awake; they serve as a standard by which others judge of propriety and impropriety in their own conduct. Others are placed in situations where it seems as though they could do nothing but pray; their prayers, however, are essential to the purposes of God.

Others occupy places of more obvious influence and importance; but to every real servant of God in this world, there is committed some trust. He may be only like a single stone in the wall; its presence is not remarked upon, but its absence would be; and its removal, therefore, becomes an important event. He who orders everything in this world as Head over all things to the church does not suffer his faithful servants to die by chance; their removal is an event of too much importance to be left without special care and appointment; it is to be considered in each case whether this good example may safely be removed, or that restraining influence over others cease, or those prayers be suspended; whether the interests of large bodies of men, and the general affairs of the Redeemer's kingdom, will permit the removal of one servant of God and another, at particular times. Christ "has the keys of death."

"A Christian cannot die before his time,
The Lord's appointment is the servant's hour."

3. The immediate effect of the affliction upon survivors, cannot but render the death of a good man precious in the sight of God.

I see the tents of Israel in affliction. The bell which survived on the wreck, tolling the knell of the dead, seems as though it had received a special commission to utter the feelings of the whole church of God in this land. God never does anything, however dark and trying, which diminishes the confidence and love of his true children. The man who should wantonly do a deed that would plunge the whole people of God into sorrow, it would have been better for him if he had never been born. A paper dropped at the door by the carrier, containing an account of the "wreck of the Atlantic," gives the first intimation to his household respecting the possible fate of the husband and father. With every support which God affords the mind at such a moment, there is of course a degree of anguish which He, who "does not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men," would not permit without special consideration, and for wise and benevolent purposes.

I look away from the dwelling where the messenger conveys to that family the intelligence which is to clothe them in sackcloth. I cannot trust myself to hear that burst of grief as one member of the household after another receives the tidings; I cannot even think of the scene with composure. But God knew beforehand how it would break the heart; he had written beforehand all those tears in his book. The death of that saint, bringing such an effect with it, must have been precious in the sight of God. He is the father of the fatherless, and the widow's God and Judge. He knew how it would afflict and grieve multitudes of his people; it must have been appointed, therefore, and fulfilled by him with a consideration which an event so important for its immediate and its future influence on near and dear relatives and friends, required. Faith sees the guardian hand of God in the promiscuous ruin; the good man among the victims or the falling deck is not like one of an uncounted flock; the rude blow, and the reckless surge, and the sands hastening to entomb him, are not the true exponents of the feelings of the Most High at such an event. But "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," "and precious shall their blood be in his sight," if for no other reason, because he considers and appreciates the feelings of those who will be deeply afflicted by the death of relatives and friends.

4. The death of good men is so commonly a means of glorifying God, that it cannot be otherwise than important and interesting in his sight.

Though we look to the life of a man for the evidence of his goodness, we expect his death to illustrate it. The views and feelings of a man in that honest hour, when he has no motive to deceive others, when he is expecting soon to stand before One whom he cannot deceive, are a powerful testimony to his private character and to the sincerity and value of his religion. Not to dwell on this obvious fact, I will only allude to the recognition of it by our Lord, of whom the Evangelist says, speaking of the Saviour's intimations to Peter respecting that disciple's end, "This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God." We know that the death of good men has ever been a powerful means of good. It must, therefore, have great importance and interest in the sight of God; so that the time, and all the attending circumstances of it upon which its influence so much depends, are of course ordered by infinite wisdom.

Let us illustrate this, and at the same time make a profitable use of it in the way of consolation, by referring to the event which we now mourn. Fears had for some time been entertained that our departed friend would not long continue with us. This was his own impression, and that of others, owing to some alarming symptoms. Supposing then that our fears with regard to him would, in the course of nature, soon have been fulfilled, we may, without undertaking to interpret the purposes and providence of

God, see reasons to believe that the event of his death was, in the sense explained, precious in his sight.

For, in the first place, he was spared the pain of a lingering illness, in which bodily suffering would not have been so hard for such a man as he to bear, as the suspension of his labors.

Again, he was made the instrument of religious consolation, and it may be of salvation, to a number of his fellow creatures, in the hour of peril. The survivors will remember his exhortations and prayers so long as they remember their deliverance. Will they, can they, neglect such a salvation, and finally perish? Most of those who were near him when the deck fell, it is supposed, perished as he did, at once, by the blow. He knelt in prayer with them and others, and before praying, requested them to remain upon their knees a few moments after his prayer should be finished. Perhaps in those moments of silent prayer, amid the howlings of the winds and waves, and the violent motion of the ship, the words of Scripture (Mark iv. 35—41) which he had just read, in which the Saviour says to the stormy wind, "Peace be still," had a fulfilment in the presence of the Redeemer with his converting grace; and from that scene of ruin and death some souls with him may have immediately passed into heaven. Had he preached a sermon from a pulpit which God should have blessed to the instant conversion of a few souls, we should have looked upon him as one on whom God had placed the seal of his special favor. We may find hereafter that such a seal was placed upon his last brief exhortation; and it may be, that as a constellation comes up in the sea and takes its place in the firmament, so a number of souls rose up from that wreck and took their place together in heaven, while he, their guiding star, draws the eyes of heaven to him and to those who may have been saved by him; for indeed he has turned many to righteousness, and will shine as the stars for ever and ever. We fear to say a word which may possibly encourage late repentance; yet we cannot limit the grace of God. In view of his known usefulness, and of the influence which he may have exerted in the salvation of some, we can say with truth that such a death as his, in the sense already explained, is precious in the sight of God.

But this is not all. Throughout the large district of country over which his recent labors have extended, it would have been difficult to find the man whose death, under similar circumstances, would have produced a deeper sensation. The reason is, he had established himself in the affections of good men, as an eminently pious, simple-hearted, devoted servant of the Lord Jesus, to whom the cause of human salvation, the spread of the gospel through the world, was dearer than all earthly comfort, and even than life. We may say, with reverence and submission, it seems to have been important "by what death" such a man "should glorify God."

It is not presumption, then, to say that we see divine wisdom

and care in the manner of his death. To all the churches of the land, wherever his influence has been felt, and indeed to every Christian in this and in all lands who has ever heard of him, or may hear of his death, he preaches, and will continue to preach, a sermon on the subject of missions whose influence cannot fail to be felt. Seldom does God set a man in such a pulpit. In the full exercise of his missionary and ministerial office he disappears from our view. He is taken up by a whirlwind into heaven. Many an Elisha already catches his spirit and power; and not only the sons of the prophets, but all Israel, see and feel that the cause of missions had a good man taken from its head that day. Had he gone to heaven from his peaceful bed, had he first spent lingering years of infirmity, removed from active labor, the death of such a man would, at any time, have produced a deep impression; but he left his work at an hour when God summoned the nation to look on and see him die. The fame of the missionary cause is lifted up on the wings of the wind. It is impressed more deeply on the minds of men through the power of sympathy; they cannot but regard it as a striking providence, that such a man should have perished in that wreck, and seeing the testimony of survivors to his excellent goodness, they feel that God must have intended to honor him and his employment by such a death. Happy man! Chosen of God to stir the affections of his people by their love and sympathy for their friend and fellow servant towards that cause which was his life. The exhortation is always appropriate—"Be still, and know that I am God;" but in this case we feel something more than submission; we are not satisfied at merely being still; we are disposed to exult with our glorified brother, and to shout, Salvation! Salvation! for him, and through him, instrumentally, for the dying heathen. Precious, indeed, in the sight of God, was such a death! Then we will cherish the remembrance of it, not so much to weep for him, but to fulfill the purposes of God in it.

WILLIAM J. ARMSTRONG was born at Mendham, New Jersey, October 29, 1796, and was the son of the Rev. Amzi Armstrong, D.D. He was the eldest of nine children; five of his six sisters and one brother are now living.

His parents cherished a strong desire that he should become a minister of the Gospel. At the age of thirteen he was ready to enter college, but his constitution was not robust, and he therefore remained at home, laboring upon a farm, till his eighteenth year, by which means he acquired great bodily vigor. In the autumn of 1814, he entered the junior class of the college at Princeton, then under the presidency of the Rev. Dr. Green. During the five years previous to his entering college he devoted much time to general reading, and always considered those years as a most important and influential period in his studies.

In youth he had great exuberance of feeling, was sprightly and

joyful, entering with his whole soul into the amusements, and also, as he frequently complained, the follies, of youth, though it is believed he contracted no vicious habits. His first decided religious impressions were produced by a sermon which his father preached to the young people of his charge, with special reference to his son. These impressions were partially lost for a season; and his natural ardor and impetuosity were so great that his father wept and prayed much at the thought of his exposure to the dangers of a college life; but in the course of a few months, during a special attention to religion in college, he indulged a hope of acceptance with God. It is believed to be this attention to religion at Nassau Hall which gave occasion to that useful tract in the series of the American Tract Society, called "Questions and Counsel," by Rev. Dr. Green.

From this period Mr. Armstrong looked to the sacred ministry as his profession; and it is an interesting and well-authenticated fact, that he thought seriously at that time of devoting himself to the work of a Foreign Mission. He made a profession of his faith in Mendham, in the spring of 1815, his beloved father being thus owned and blessed of God in first calling his attention to the concerns of his soul, and in receiving him to the Christian church.

He completed his college course in 1816, with a respectable standing as a scholar. His father then had charge of a flourishing academy in Bloomfield, New Jersey. Placing himself under the care of a presbytery as a candidate for the ministry, he began the study of theology under the direction of his father, whom he assisted in the academy. From time to time he submitted himself for examination to the Rev. Dr. Richards, then a pastor in Newark. At the expiration of two years, he was licensed to preach. He then spent a year at the seminary at Princeton, preaching on the Sabbath, and at other times as he had opportunity.

Being thus prepared for the exercise of his office, he devoted himself to the work of Home Missions, under the direction of the General Assembly's Board. His first place of labor was Albemarle, Virginia, near the residence of Thomas Jefferson. No church existed there; the Lord's Supper had never, so far as it could be ascertained, been administered in the place. Mr. Armstrong labored two years in Charlottesville, Albemarle county, now the seat of the University of Virginia, with marked success. A Presbyterian church was gathered as the result of his labors, and it still flourishes. There were several interesting cases of conversion among infidels under his preaching, some of them the friends and associates of Jefferson, who expressed himself with some feeling on hearing of their conversion. These converted infidels became members of the newly organized church.

The declining state of his father's health recalled Mr. Armstrong to New Jersey, in 1821. In the summer of that year, Bloomfield was blessed with a revival of religion, and Mr. Armstrong labored in it, with much zeal and success, in connection

with the pastor, the Rev. Gideon N. Judd. Several churches were desirous of having him for their pastor. He accepted a unanimous call from the First Presbyterian Church in Trenton, New Jersey, and labored there with faithfulness and success, till the spring of 1824.

When the Rev. Dr. John H. Rice accepted a professorship in the Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, and left the pastoral office in the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia, he recommended Mr. Armstrong to that church, as their minister, and by his earnest solicitation he was induced to accept their call. They to whom the character or reputation of Dr. Rice are familiar, will regard this as no slight testimony in favor of our beloved friend. For ten years he was the devoted, beloved, and successful pastor of that people, of which abundant illustrations might be given.

The synods of Virginia and North Carolina organized a Board for Foreign Missions in the spring of 1834, with a view to Missionary labors through the agency of the American Board. Mr Armstrong was appointed its secretary and agent, and took a dismission from the church in Richmond. Many and very tender were the ties which were necessarily broken by this event. The people at first did not believe that it was their duty to make so great an effort as it would cost to part with him; but in view of the cause to be promoted, they consented in a manner honorable to themselves and to the gospel which they professed to love. The sacrifice on his part and that of his family was great. Those who know the state of the roads in Virginia, at certain seasons of the year, will admire the self-denying spirit of the man who, after ten years experience of the comforts of a city, and, as one calls it, "the sweet security of streets," willingly subjected himself to the labors and perils, day and night, on those wearisome highways. He continued in this service till the fall of 1835, when he was appointed one of the Secretaries for Correspondence of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and removed to Boston. His particular department of labor was the home correspondence. In 1836, in compliance with the advice of the Committee, he removed his family to the city of New York, expecting to return to Boston after two or three years; but considerations connected with the health of his family prolonged his residence there till his death. Though this involved a considerable modification of his official duties, he was most fully and usefully employed. His great delight was to preach. The Sabbath usually found him in the pulpit, almost always pleading the cause of missions; and during the week, he was never so happy as in presenting the cause in meetings for missionary purposes.

The testimonials are abundant with respect to his uncommon excellence as a pastor. His labors in the ministry, as well as in the missionary cause, frequently seemed excessive; but his early physical training gave him uncommon muscular energy, which enabled him to work for twenty-eight years with remarkable effi-

cieney. When a pastor, the cause of Missions held a large place in his thoughts. Several of those who joined the church under his ministry became Foreign Missionaries.

In his employment as Secretary of the American Board, he was eminently faithful, industrious, and zealous. No man loved the quiet of home more than he, nor sighed more for rest from incessant change ; but after parting with the Rev. Messrs. Spaulding and Scudder, on their return to the heathen, he said, "I prefer to live and die in this work." His earnest desire was to awaken Christians to prayer and effort for a dying world. He has been known to go into the office of one of the religious papers to look over the exchange papers in search for intelligence of revivals of religion, knowing that love for the heathen and contributions to the cause of Missions are generally in proportion to the increase of piety in the churches.

His zeal for the heathen grew out of his love for his fellow men, which showed itself in more ways than one. When in Virginia, he was deeply interested in the slaves, and exerted himself much for their benefit, and in efforts for the peaceable abolition of slavery. His well known zeal in this cause nearly cost him his life. He was once waylaid by two men who were opposed to his views and feelings on the subject of slavery, and received from one of them a gash through his hat, with a large sharp weapon.

But I love to think and speak of him as a man. Aside from our respect and love for him in his official relations, the hearts of all of us flowed forth to him as a good man. He impressed different friends, of course, by different qualities ; but one thing in him was peculiar and obvious to all who knew him,—the union of intense feeling with mildness of demeanor. I have seen him, in public speaking, roused to an energy of feeling which has made me think how well it was that such strength of emotion was controlled by religious principles ; in private, however, his constant smile, and his gentle, humble, conciliating manner, was like beautiful waters over volcanic places, imaging the heavens above them, but concealing the depths beneath. The impression has been made on my own mind by my intercourse with him, that he must naturally have had much to contend with in the strength of his passions ; but this impression has been made only by the strength of his religious emotions, and by some instances of great control over his feelings, which it was evident could have been gained only by one who had found occasion for, and had practised, vigorous self-discipline. He was a lovely and pleasant man. He made you feel that he loved you ; and you involuntarily loved him. He was the delight and joy of his family circle. The last Sabbath evening of his life he spent in hearing his children recite portions of Scripture and the Assembly's Catechism. It seems to have been the mysterious impression in that family circle that their rich blessing in him was not long to continue.

I will not analyze his character. I cannot make a cool and

critical estimate of his several talents. He stands before me as a holy, humble, self-denying, meek, ardent, affectionate man. He has taken his place in our hearts, and will always keep it, as one who deserves and has secured our best affections, our deepest respect, and our most tender and endearing recollections.

And is he gone ! We sat with him in the Committee meeting the Tuesday afternoon before his death, when more than once he awakened a pleasant smile by his quiet humor and happy illustrations ; and the next Tuesday evening I found myself, by appointment of the Committee, meditating his funeral sermon ! Dear associate, brother, friend ! thy path to heaven has been so suddenly made, and is yet so radiant with glory, that we do not, we cannot, feel that the connection between thee and us is severed. May we never feel that it is severed. We cannot think of thee as dead ! Thou, rather, art the living, and among the living ; and we are among the dead.

As members of the Committee and officers of the Board we will cherish the memory of thy zeal, thy fervent spirit, thine exemplary faith and patience, thy amiable disposition and conduct, which made thee a pleasant associate and fellow-laborer. We desire to fulfil the duties of our office in a manner which we think would receive thy present commendation and thy future congratulation.

Brethren in the ministry ; friends in important places of trust ; parents and fellow Christians ! There is an admonition to you in this event, peculiarly impressive. You see in the removal of this friend and brother that no usefulness, no supposed importance in your life to the cause of Christ or to the happiness of others, obtains exemption from death. Office, high and important duties, usefulness, are no security against a sudden removal from the world. God is dependent on no man's talents or help. Here is a family, consisting of a wife, and five children between the ages of six months and eighteen years. O death ! relent, and spare that husband and the father of such a family ! The inexorable stroke descends. God of our life ! we own thy sovereign control over us. "We are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled." In the language of the common law, "a man's house is his castle." We see that it is no defence against the mandates of Him who "openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth."

I would remark to my reverend fathers and brethren in the ministry, that there seems to have been a divine recognition of the pastoral office and labors of our deceased friend in his last hours, though he had not been for many years a pastor. But while a pastor, he was pre-eminently faithful. He loved his work, he loved the souls of men, and preached with direct reference to their conversion. When he is about to die, God seems to remember with what peculiar zeal he thus served him, and how he seemed

to say, on leaving the pastoral office for the missionary work, "As for me I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee;"—and accordingly the last act of his life is permitted to be a direct effort to save souls. He begins his exhortation in the cabin, when, lo ! his voice catches the ear of one at a distance, who recognizes in it the voice of the pastor of his youth ! It seems as though it were a testimony of remembrance with God of past faithfulness. That pastor's voice brought with it, to the mind of that esteemed survivor of the wreck, a throng of recollections respecting his early and subsequent life. Members of Christian congregations, young and old ! if you should accidentally hear your pastor's voice amid the scenes of judgment, will the effect of it be joy or grief with you ? That voice would recall scenes and impressions that would thrill you with pleasure, or make almost superfluous your dreadful sentence from your Judge.

He has gone to that great cloud of witnesses, who are above us and round about us. He has realized the anticipation of one of his predecessors,—Mr. Evarts,—expressed in that most striking exclamation upon his dying bed, "Oh, the face of God !" He has seen Christ, whom not having seen he loved. He has seen the multitude which no man can number, out of every nation and kindred and tongue and people. He has been welcomed by his predecessors in office, two of whom at least died like him, away from home, in the discharge of their official duties ; Worcester among the Cherokees, and Cornelius at Hartford, Connecticut.* This work of missions fills up, in the bodies of those who enter fully into its active labors among the churches at home, "that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ." Perils in the wilderness, and perils in the city, and perils in the sea, to say no more, must be the lot of those to whom is intrusted the work of inciting us to do our duty to the heathen.

But with our departed brother, all is rest, and peace, and reward. Among the redeemed I fancy that he looks with peculiar interest on the converts from heathenism. There are the bondmen of Africa, kings and priests unto God. In more than "barbaric pearl and gold" is the poor dweller by the Ganges and the Burramooter. There the American Indian adores Him who is "more glorious and excellent than the mountain of prey." Kings' daughters, from the Sandwich Islands and Tahiti, are among the "honorable women." At Christ's right hand is that Madagascar queen. The oppressed mountaineer of Lebanon, the persecuted Armenian, are where "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." The Persian worships a brighter Sun than that which rises on flowery Ispahan. The men of Burmah

*Mr. Evarts was, at the time of his death, in Charleston, South Carolina, having been for some time out of health.

and Siam wonder for ever at the grace which raised them from their native debasement. Our brother felt himself a debtor to the Jew and the Greek ; he sees them both there ; and a sweeter savor to God than that “ o'er Ceylon's isle,” is he by whose efforts, in part, salvation has been flowing forth to the Tamil people. The old Nestorian church has brought forth fruit in old age, some of which is gathered unto eternal life. The Chinese sees his wall of separation exchanged for a wall within which he walks with “ the nations of them that are saved.” To look on such a sight for one hour, is an ample recompense for the toil and suffering by which that glory and bliss have been prepared. What, then, must eternity in heaven be !

When I think that he has seen our King, and “ the meat of his table, and the attendance of his ministers and their apparel, and the ascent by which they go up to the presence of the Lord,” there is no more spirit in me, not only at the thought of what he has seen, but of our nearness to it, and our sure inheritance with him, ere long, of that unutterable glory and joy !

Courage, then, ye dear, faithful missionaries of the cross ; beloved fellow-laborers, everywhere, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ ; associates in the labors and cares of this work ! One of our number has just been parted from us, and taken up into heaven. We have followed him with our voices and tears of mingled sadness and love ; we have followed him to heaven. Let us return, like the disciples, to our labor, and may I not add, “ with great joy.”

Just before the dreadful crisis on board the Atlantic, it is said that the passengers shook hands with each other ; and thus they parted, for the terrible and solitary contest which every one of them was about to have for his life. As we separate here, first for the work of Christ, and then to meet in heaven, let us pledge our hearts and hands to one another, and to all the beloved missionaries round the globe, and to “ all who, in every place, call on the name of the Lord Jesus, both theirs and ours.” Let us feel that we are all embarked in the same ship, with a common peril ; that we must all be cast into the waves of death ; that the world, and all that is therein, must be destroyed, and that our proper business is to save our own souls and the souls of others.

Welcome, then, toil and peril, for Christ's sake, and for the souls of men, for a little season. Farewell, for a little season, dear brother, and we will meet you where there is no more sea. “ Precious in the sight of the Lord,” and precious to his people has been thy death ! Till, with our work finished, we are summoned home ; till, with songs and everlasting joy upon our heads we, with the ransomed, come to Zion ; till we meet and mingle with thee in the worship and the friendships, the recollections and the anticipations, of heaven, farewell, dear brother and friend, farewell !